

Rainy Season Reminders

Now that the rainy season is here, it is time to review some important concepts and practices for protecting your construction site this winter. This bulletin will focus on critical soil stabilization and sediment control Best Management Practices (BMPs) that are required for the rainy season.

Administration Practices

A good starting point for rainy season preparation is to reacquaint yourself with the approved SWPPP/WPCP submitted by the contractor. Consider the following in the review:

- Has the contractor met the minimum winter season BMP requirements?
- Does the SWPPP/WPCP reflect current and planned construction activities?
- If changes are necessary, has the contractor submitted an amendment to the SWPPP/WPCP?
- Have SWPPP/WPCP amendments been approved by the Resident Engineer?

Disturbed Soil Areas - Active and Inactive

A key consideration for winter season storm water pollution prevention is the size of the active, disturbed soil area (DSA). Project Special Provisions generally restrict this area to 2 - 4 hectares (5 - 10 acres) in the rainy season.

If it is necessary to exceed the specified limit, the Resident Engineer should document the approval in writing and ensure that the contractor has sufficient soil stabilization and sediment control materials on hand for the disturbed area in the event of rain.



Limiting disturbed soil areas is a good winter season practice.

Soil stabilization practices must be in place on all inactive DSAs throughout the rainy season. Inactive areas, those not scheduled to be impacted by construction activities for a period of 20 days or more, need to be fully protected with the applicable BMPs within 10 days after construction activities have ceased or prior to the onset of precipitation, whichever comes first.

Soil stabilization practices are to be deployed on all active DSAs prior to the onset of precipitation during the rainy season. An acceptable alternative to soil stabilization is the use of detention/retention basins. At a minimum, use a one year, 24-hour design storm event when sizing the basin. Another option, depending on the slope length, slope rate, and drainage area, is the use of silt fence, sandbag or straw bale barriers.

Sediment control measures are required at all significant erodible slopes as defined in Table 500-1 of the *Caltrans Storm Water Quality Handbooks, Construction Contractors Guide and Specification*, unless the slope is fully protected per Section 20 or 72 of the Standard Specifications.

Common Soil Stabilization BMPs

Consider the following soil stabilization BMPs for your site. Conditions for use vary, so refer to the Handbook for details:

- CD22 - Scheduling
- CD23 - Preservation of Existing Vegetation
- CD24B - Temporary Seeding and Planting
- CD25 - Mulching
- CD26A - Soil Stabilizers
- CD26B - Geotextiles, Mats/Plastic Covers And Erosion Control Blankets.



Severe slope erosion due to improper soil stabilization practices.

Sediment Control BMPs

The following sediment control BMPs from the Handbook also require consideration:

- CD34 - Check Dams
- CD36 - Silt Fences
- CD37 - Straw Bale Barrier
- CD38 - Sand Bag Barrier
- CD40 - Storm Drain Inlet Protection
- CD42 - Sediment Basin

Last But Not Least

- Sediment tracking, wind erosion, and non-storm water BMP requirements remain in effect year round.
- Inspect BMPs, and document all observations, at a minimum of every two weeks, before and after rain events, and every 24 hours during extended rain events.

